

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, November 30, 1885, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Scott Circle, 1500 Rhode Island Avenue November 30th., 1885. My dear Alec:

Your letter this morning was such a delightful surprise. Thank you ever so much for it — I felt badly to think I had not written to you, but how could I when I had not the remotest idea where the letter should be sent. Does your letter belong to the preserving or burning category? How long did it take you to write it, and how many rough drafts? It is such a nice letter I hate to burn it but will if you desire, please don't though! You did not enclose any description of your ideas for Mr. Gleason so I didn't give him any. What a good little man you were to walk those five miles, or at least to begin them. I did not understand from the telegram whether you had made them or were half way through. What is z-z-z. the matter with Miss Radcliffe? I am dying with curiosity and so is the poor Dr. though he calls it by another name. He says he knows no more than I and is puzzled over your statement that you had seen his sister. I wrote to him Sat. evening enclosing a \$20.00 bill and offering to take his children, but he returned it being afraid to go on in his present state of health and not being wanted by his relatives. He is dreadfully worried and I should think might feel hurt at so little being told him. Nellie and Mr. Davis were at the school today and George and the babies. I called on Mrs. Hull and also sent the last of four attempts at a letter to her this morning. You will be delighted to hear that I was also the coldest and most heartless of the lot. I told her that you hoped to make your office at the school and to superintend the childrens education and to teach them yourself a good deal, more 2 or less, but that you would and could not bind yourself to anything. That you were sat. with Mrs. B. teaching and had no obj. to her teach. George — but added that I was very unwilling she should come to your rooms and did not believe you would go against my feeling in the matter. That however we would both welcome Floyd on the same terms as George if his mother

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desired. I wrote and told Mrs. Hall also that you sent me to assure George the use of yr. school room jointly with other children and that through Mr. Home's great kindness in teaching in the primary for you, you were enabled to send George to the Kindergarten as formerly, but that Mrs. Hull must engage her own teacher or teachers and have it understood you had no interest in any pecuniary arrangement they might make. I called on Mrs. Home also and breached the subject of her receiving compensation for her work, but she utterly refused to receive any at least from you. I demurred saying it was not just or right but she reminded me that you had formerly done a good deal for her, so I did not feel there was anything more for me to say. Dr. Radcliffe thinks my idea of compromising matters with Mrs. Spier as follows very good — Mrs. Home will teach in primary until Jan. or Feb. and so long as she remains Miss Hesselbach will pay rent. When she leaves you will excuse her paying on consideration of her releasing you from your promise to provide a teacher. Should she make more than \$800.00 she will pay as much rent as the surplus allows. I asked D. R. — why if it would not be a good idea for Miss H. to send out another circular now while Congress is assembling. There must be many children in the members' families.

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Dr. Radcliffe says he knows of a young man — a printer in the Govt. Printing Office who would be glad to set up type and print for you as Mr. Maguire is doing now. You said to me — “Find me some one who will do Meguire's work and then I will dismiss him” — hence this effort.

We had quite a little excitement last night “all along of” Becky's seeing two ghosts! I was sitting writing in my morning room when she disturbed me very much by running wildly around barking furiously and leaping up on me. I tried to quiet her, no use, she kept on barking and barking and running towards my room. I got up, found it was 12 P. M. and every one gone to bed. What could be the matter? Horrible memories of thieves discovered by dogs barking came to my mind, I followed Bec. she ran into my room and O horrors! barked violently all around the bed. Thoroughly scared I woke Nellie made her

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dress and together we explored my room and she not I peeped under my bed! Nobody or anything was there nor behind the sofa or under the childrens' beds and going into the hall my mind was finally and completely set at rest by seeing You lying quietly on the settee. If there had been a stranger I felt convinced she too would have told me, Miss Palmer came from the spare room and we held a counsel of war and decided that Becky's excitement was from her seeing Nellie come into my bedroom in the dark and in her nightgown, she had barked at her then and kept rushing to me and back again so wildly that Miss Palmer came in her nightgown and stood in the dark hall and completely upset the poor little dog! So as I say Becky saw two ghosts and frightened us 4 thoroughly. This evening I got another wild fright, to reassure me after last night Amott showed me his pistol and said I was quite safe and succeeded in frightening me by the mere sight of it with the barrel carefully turned away. Well after last night's excitement will you be surprised to hear that the sight of Yo so calmly curled up so completely soothed me that I went to bed and never even dreamed or thought of burglars again.

We dined with Papa and Mamma yesterday. Papa is better. Mr. Home and Douglas dined here today and now I am going back to my embroidiery until bedtime. I think I have done enough for you today giving up my whole morning to your affairs. I hope they will prosper accordingly.

My dear darling I hope you will have a beautiful time and walk and eat carefully and not smoke so many cigars as your letter told of (between the lines!)

Yours loving, May —